How Do You Take Your Water?

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It's a sizzling, hot summer day, and the sweat is rolling off your neck. It's the perfect time for a cold glass of water. Just run to the end of your driveway and fill a glass with runoff from your driveway, or dip your glass into the storm drain for a nice glass of storm water. Or how about cooling off by splashing in the water in the storm drain? Not too refreshing or appealing uh? I once saw a woman and her infant sit and splash in the water leaving the storm drain at the beach. They were having a great time playing in the foam bubbling out of the pipe until she learned the origin of the water.

Contaminated water, it's a scary thing that's all around us. We depend on billions of gallons of water per day. Most of us are familiar with pollutants from industries. But did you know that individuals also contribute contaminates to our water supply? Have you ever rinsed your driveway with the water hose after working on your car? Have you ever used cleaning products to clean your driveway? Have you ever dumped dirty water into a storm drain, or washed grass clippings, or leaves into the storm drain? Have you ever over fertilized your lawn? Have you ever dumped petroleum, oil or lubricant products into the storm drain or on the ground? Have you ever killed grass/weeds with gasoline or bleach? All of these activities add pollutants to our water supply. Remember when it rains precipitation runs over the land or through the ground and picks up pollutants and deposits them into water bodies, ground water and sink holes.

Water in our storm drainage system is not treated prior to being released into our water supply. Additionally, water is constantly reused. There is no "new" water on the earth. Therefore, the manner in which we use water has a direct affect on our water supply. Think about all the spills from vehicles in driveways, at gas stations, and in parking lots. Our storm drains are often toxic fusions that include litter, pet waste, fertilizers, metals, grease, paint, vehicle fluids, construction debris, and chemicals. Are you willing to take the chance that everything that is put into our waters is removed before it makes it to your kitchen sink or the lake you use recreationally? How much are you willing to pay for clean water? Will there be enough clean water for the future?

So how can you protect our water supply? First use water wisely. Use a nozzle and a back flow device on you water hose, wash only full loads of clothes or dishes, do not let water run while brushing teeth, use low flow devices in your home, and do not use the toilet as a trash can. Recycle, do not dump household waste or chemicals in unapproved places. Compost food scraps and reuse in the garden or on the lawn. Build a rain garden. Plant native vegetation and use mulch to cut watering. Vegetate bare areas as soon as possible. Use biodegradable soaps. Sweep and compost grass clippings, do not wash grass clippings and sediment into the storm drainage system. Clean up after your pet. Use a car wash facility. Remember if you don't want to drink it or swim in it don't put it into the storm drain.

The second thing you can do to protect your water supply is learn about your watershed, where your drinking water is derived and become involved in any local organizations or activities. Take note of your storm drains especially the next time it rains. Remember pollution begins and ends with you.

Facts and fun things to do:
Did you know that one out of every five toilets leak; however, most cannot be detected. Place several drops of food coloring in your tank-wait 10-30 minutes-if there is color in the bowl, you have a leak.

Per the American Water Works Association 75% of American are chronically dehydrated, and lack of water is the number one trigger of daytime fatigue.

Nearly 2/3rds of your body is water:

1. Write your weight:
2. Divide by 3:
3. Multiply by 4:

That's about how many 8-oz. glasses it would take to equal the water in you!

Established lawns only need an inch of water per week. The next time you water your lawn, place an empty tuna can (6.0 oz) in your yard. When it is full, you'll know you have watered about an inch. Remember-do not try to water an inch all at one time.

In twenty minutes, one thunder storm can drop over 125,000,000 gallons of water!

Water is the only thing in nature that can be a liquid, solid or a gas!

The average American uses 100 gallons of water per day!

Don't forget it takes energy to use water; therefore, using less will not only decrease your water bill, but also your energy bill.

For additional information please check the following websites:
http://www.epa.gov/region4/water/nps
http://www.water.ky.gov/publicassistance/findings/nps
http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu.wateruse.html